1: Holmberg--37 [6] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 276, 527

"The Siriono do not seem to be much addicted to the use of tobacco. However, its role in the drinking feast is important in aiding the participants to arrive at a semi-drugged or partially intoxicated condition. During the drinking feasts for women I often heard them singing impromptu songs about pipes and tobacco which indicates that this drug may have some further magical significance that I was unable to ascertain. Tobacco, however, is never used therapeutically."

1: Holmberg--37-38 (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 527, 273, 222

"Accompanying the frustrations of forest life are occasional drinking bouts, which vary in frequency with the quantity of wild bee honey available. Since this product is most abundant in the dry season—after the flowering of the plants and [38] trees—most of them thus occur during the months of August, September, October, and November."

1: Holmberg--38 [4] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 527

"Drinking bouts usually start informally. The man possessing the liquor invites a number of his male relatives to join him in consuming what beer he may have on hand. Bouts generally start in the afternoon, and, depending upon the quantity of liquor available, may last until far into the night or even be continued on the following day. The participants squat in a circle near the host's hammock, and as a calabash of mead is passed around, each in his turn drinks heavy draughts before passing it to the next person in the circle. The drinking is always accompanied by continual smoking of clay pipes (also passed around the circle), which ultimately contributes as much or more to the resulting intoxicated or drugged condition as does the somewhat light and nourishing native beer."

1: Holmberg--38 [5] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 527, 533, 152

"As a drinking feast progresses, the Siriono, who is a very uncommunicative fellow when sober, becomes an animated conversationalist, a performer, and a braggart. At the opening of the bout the talk usually turns to the merits of the liquor. One of my more poetic informants, Erésa-eánta (Strong-eyes), used to say, in describing the liquor at the start of almost every drinking feast: 'Yesterday it was without force, like water or like earth, but today it has great strength.' As the effects of the drinking and the smoking begin to be felt, one or more of the participants breaks out in song, usually impromptu and related to some exploit of which he is particularly proud, such as the killing of a tapir or a harpy eagle. Another may be engaged in discussing the desirability of looking for a new wife (always a young one or yukwáki) or of casting out the shrew he now has. As the mood gets mellower everyone joins the singing, and when the party has reached an advanced stage almost everyone is singing a different tune at the same time.

While attending these drinking feasts, I tried my best to record a number of these songs, but I was never able to set down more than snatches of them because of the bedlam and the darkness existing at the time. Moreover, since most of the participants, following a drinking bout, were victims of alcoholic amnesia, brutal hangovers, and high anxieties, it was impossible to get much cooperation from them in this matter later."

1: Holmberg--38-39 (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 527, 579

"At every drinking feast of any size most of the nonparticipating members of the group are assembled at the edge of the circle. The spectators amust themselves listening to the songs and the conversation, commenting on the course of the feast, and waiting for the participants to get drunk enough so that they can sneak a drink now and [39] then. Children are always present, eagerly awaiting the emptying of a calabash, since it is then passed to them to drain the dregs. The women are almost always in the background watching over their husbands, because they are quite certain from previous experience that the party will end in a brawl. This is always the case when there is sufficient liquor. A man deep in his cups will turn to another (it may be his brother, uncle, his son-in-law, or even his father-in-law) and insult him with some such phrase as 'Etómi túti nde' ('You are very lazy') or 'Ai í tendé gátu' ('You never bring me meat with any fat on it'). He will be answered in the same vein, and a fight will soon break out. The Siriono do not fight with their fists at this time; physical aggression is expressed in the form of a wrestling match, in which one participant tries to throw the other to the ground again and again until he is too exhausted to rise. Since the contestants are usually so drunk that they cannot stand up, these wrestling matches frequently terminate with both of them passed out on the floor much to the merriment of the spectators. Not infrequently, however, one or the other (or both) falls into one of the innumerable fires in every Siriono hut and gets badly burned."

1: Holmberg--39 (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 579, 527, 593

"When the party reaches the fighting stage the crying women intervene and try to stop the fights. At this time they too come in for their share of aggression and not infrequently are struck forcibly by their husbands. However, I heard of only one case in which a man murdered his wife in one of these drinking bouts. This happened approximately 15 years ago, the wife being shot through the heart with an arrow. Although overt aggression runs high during drinking feasts, after they are over the participants usually suppress their angry feelings within a few days' time, and all is normal again until another drinking bout takes place. Insofar as I observed little sexual activity takes place during or immediately after drinking feasts. Participants are usually too drunk to indulge in sex."

1: Holmberg--39 [4] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 273, 527, 533, 562

"Like the men, the women too have their drinking feasts, but these do not usually terminate as roughly as those of the men. In five of these feasts which I observed, singing was the prominent feature apart from the drinking and smoking. Although the women accused each other of having had sexual relations with one another's husbands, most of them had reached such an intoxicated condition by the time these accusations were made that they were placed in their hammocks to sleep it off.

In only one instance did I observe mixed drinking. This involved three old women and their husbands and brothers. On this occasion, however, only a few calabashes of mead were available, and the party was not organized in any way."

1: Holmberg--62 [3] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 152, 527, 578, 273, 626

"Drinking feasts are occasions on which much latent antagonism and aggression are expressed between men. At these feasts men openly air their complaints, whether these have to do with food, with sex, or with any other subject of contention. The disputes are settled by wrestling matches, and are usually forgotten after the period of drunkenness is over. It is interesting to note that aggression at drinking feasts is limited to wrestling matches; any other type of fighting is frowned upon and is usually stopped by non-participant men and women. On one occasion Eantándu, when drunk, struck an opponent with his fists. Everyone began to clamor that he was fighting unfairly, 'like a white man.' He stopped immediately."

1: Holmberg--83 [6] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 527, 884

"While ceremonial life is almost negligible among the Siriono, membership in full adulthood is signified by participation in a bloodletting ceremony and drinking feast which is called hidai-idákwa. This is about the only ceremony performed by the Siriono. It was never held while I was living with them, but the marks on the arms of adult men and women were visible evidence that it is occasionally performed."

"Under strictly aboriginal conditions the Ceremony is apparently held once a year, when the trees are flowering and there is an abundance of honey. Men and women collect large quantities of honey, and mead is brewed. While the mead is maturing, people participating in the ceremony have their hair cut, and are decorated with feathers and painted with uruku.

The ceremony begins with a drinking feast. The men hold one; the women another. Children are tended by those too young to take part or by those not participating in the ceremony for other reasons. Singing and dancing are a prominent part of the festival. When the participants reach a drunken stage, they pierce each other in the arms with a dorsal spine of the sting ray, and the blood is let into small holes in the ground. Men usually perform the operation both on themselves [84] and on the women. Each person is punctured about a half dozen times, the men on the lower arms from the wrist to the elbow and the women on the upper arms from the elbow to the shoulder. On the morning following bloodletting, the men depart for the hunt at the break of day, the women following (with baskets of ashes which they spread along the trail) to gather palm cabbage. They return from the forest about noon, and drinking begins again. By the end of the second day the supply of mead has usually been exhausted, and the celebration ends.

A general feast is not held during the ceremony, but people eat at their own fires. Old pots must be thrown away, and cooking is done in new ones. According to informants, the participants are not allowed to eat the following foods for about 3 days after bloodletting: guan, coati, anteater, jaguar, deer, squirrel, otter, monkey, tortoise, fox,

armadillo, paca, porcupine, agouti, and palm cabbage. If they violate these food taboos, it is believed that the wounds caused by bloodletting will become infected. Consequently, the game hunted by the participants is distributed to members of the extended family not taking part in the rites. According to Eóko, the diet of the ceremonial party is limited to peccary, tapir, fish, and vegetable foods (except palm cabbage)."